

Community resources

[Follow us on Twitter](#) [Check our Reddit](#) [Twitter this](#) [Digg this page](#) [Contact us on IRC](#)

courage is contagious

Viewing cable 08MADRID698, DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION'S JUNE 24, 2008, MEETING

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#08MADRID698**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
08MADRID698	2008-06-24 15:05	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Madrid

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.eluniverso.com/2011/04/11/1/1355/cable-159454.html>

VZCZCXRO2083
RR RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHROV RUEHSR
DE RUEHMD #0698/01 1761505
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 241505Z JUN 08
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4985
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 5360
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1299
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 1420

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 000698

SIPDIS

FOR WHA/AND, ALSO FOR USOAS AND EUR/WE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/24/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [CO](#) [VE](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION'S JUNE 24, 2008, MEETING
WITH FM MORATINOS' C...

id: 159454

date: 6/24/2008 15:05

refid: 08MADRID698
origin: Embassy Madrid
classification: CONFIDENTIAL
destination:
header:
VZCZCXRO2083
RR RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHROV RUEHSR
DE RUEHMD #0698/01 1761505
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 241505Z JUN 08
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4985
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 5360
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1299
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 1420

----- header ends -----

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 000698

SIPDIS

FOR WHA/AND, ALSO FOR USOAS AND EUR/WE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/24/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [CO](#) [VE](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION'S JUNE 24, 2008, MEETING
WITH FM MORATINOS' CHIEF OF STAFF JAVIER SANCHO

Classified By: DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION HUGO LLORENS, REASONS 1.4(B)(D).

¶1. (C) Summary. Deputy Chief of Mission Hugo Llorens met June 24, 2008, with FM Moratinos' Chief of Staff (and Spain's next Ambassador to the OAS) Javier Sancho. Sancho provided a readout on Moratinos' recent visit to Venezuela and Colombia.

In Venezuela, Moratinos continued efforts to repair strained relations with Venezuela and discussed a possible visit by President Chavez to Spain. Sancho detected a more constructive tone from Chavez and FM Maduro when it came to Colombia and the FARC. In Colombia, Moratinos met with President Uribe and discussed a still confidential plan to put a Spanish radar in Ecuador to cover the border region. The DCM urged that as Spain mended fences with Venezuela, it continue to be attentive to efforts to erode democratic institutions there and any attempts by Venezuela to acquire more arms. End summary.

Venezuela

¶2. (C) Sancho described Moratinos' June 16-18 visit to Venezuela and Colombia as intense. In Venezuela, Moratinos had meetings with both Chavez and Maduro. Sancho emphasized that conversations in Venezuela were focused almost entirely on bilateral issues, including the situation of Spanish businesses and Spanish citizens resident in Venezuela. Sancho said Spain was trying to patch up relations with Venezuela following the tense exchange between the King of Spain and Chavez at the Iberoamerican Summit in November ¶2007. He noted that at the EU-Latam Summit in Lima in May, it was agreed that the foreign ministers would follow-up, hence Moratinos' visit to Venezuela. Sancho emphasized the rapprochement had the full blessing of King Juan Carlos. Sancho said the Venezuelans seemed to be focusing on the future and welcomed an improved dialogue with Spain. He said Chavez' tone was more conciliatory than in the past, and he emphasized his regard for Spain. The idea now was for Chavez to visit Spain, perhaps in July to attend the Zaragoza exposition. Sancho emphasized no date was set, and said he had personal doubts as to whether Chavez would come. He said Chavez would have to measure his steps carefully in terms of the Spanish public reaction to such a visit, noting the Spanish reaction to Chavez' entourage resplendent in their matching red shirts might not be what Chavez would want.

¶3. (C) Sancho was struck by what he called a clear change in tone from both Chavez and Maduro when speaking of the FARC.

He said both made the point that times had changed and the path to power was through elections, not through guerrilla warfare. Chavez expressed his admiration for Uribe and spoke of their good personal chemistry, asking Moratinos to give the Colombian President a hug for him. Chavez mentioned that he and Uribe were going to meet soon, probably in July.

Colombia

14. (C) Sancho said the visit to Colombia was no accident. Moratinos realized that after visiting Venezuela it was critical to send the right signal about Spain's continuing regard for Colombia. Meeting Uribe in Cali, Moratinos had a long meeting which Sancho described as excellent. He said the bilateral portion of the agenda included immigration and investment issues (he mentioned that all of Spain's investment disputes in Colombia were resolved thanks to Uribe). Moratinos asked Uribe his opinion of a plan to put a Spanish radar in Ecuador to provide coverage along the border with Colombia. After consulting his military experts, Uribe said he had no objection so long as the radar was controlled by Spanish personnel. Sancho said the radar was intended to help remove the Ecuadorian excuse that it did not have the means to control the border. He said the radar plan was not public knowledge and asked that the DCM treat the information as confidential.

15. (C) Sancho opined that Uribe's problems at the moment were more with President Correa of Ecuador than with Chavez and that Uribe was grateful for Spain's ability to serve as an interlocutor with Correa. He said Uribe appreciated Spain's role in the region and that Colombia knew full well that Spain regarded it, along with Chile, Mexico, and Peru, as a key country in Latin America.

16. (C) The DCM underscored the importance of both Colombia and Uribe. He pointed out that Uribe had been a strikingly successful president, reviving the Colombian economy,

MADRID 00000698 002 OF 002

spreading the rule of law, dramatically reducing kidnapping, and mounting a successful campaign against the FARC which had the narco-terrorists on the ropes. He noted Uribe's popularity with the Colombian people and contrasted that to Chavez' situation. The DCM said that if Chavez was adopting a more moderate tone on the FARC, that could be merely a tactic in response to the embarrassing information from the Raul Reyes laptops concerning Venezuela and the FARC. He added that while Spain might perceive a need to strike a more positive tone in relations with Venezuela to move past last year's public disagreements, it should be alert to any efforts by Chavez to weaken democracy, tamper with elections, restrict freedom of the press, limit individual rights, or acquire more arms. Sancho quickly agreed on the arms sale issue and assured the DCM that Spain and the U.S. were in step on Venezuela. Sancho also mentioned that the information Spain had seen so far on a possible FARC-ETA connection had not been persuasive of the existence of such a link.

Comment

17. (C) Moratinos has been working for months to put the "why don't you shut up" incident in the past. We suspect a visit by Chavez to Spain now would probably have the opposite effect, but there is only one way to find out. It is a positive sign that Moratinos made a point of including Colombia in this trip, and it underscores what the Spanish have told us often of late about their understanding of the importance of Colombia to the stability of the region.

AGUIRRE

=====CABLE ENDS=====